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But to effectually protect them so that the fullest benefit of these fine materials, this careful, cleanly baking, this unique goodness comes to you unaltered, was the crowning triumph that gave the world

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Observant merchants know that this is true. They should gain courage from the knowledge to strengthen their advertising campaigns to the point of matching their store-hopes and plans.

A WOMAN'S ENCHANTMENT

By William Le Queux

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William Le Queux

(Continued.)

"Where could I find her, do you think?" I added.

"How should I know?" "But you might make a shrewd guess. You admit knowing the young woman, don't you?"

"Certainly. She was French—from Aix, in Provence, I believe. But she's not likely to have come back home."

"Why?"

"Because she has money, and would, therefore, keep away from her parents. That class only returns to the paternal roof when stranded."

"Where shall I look for her?"

"My dear fellow, how should I know?" he repeated, half impatiently. "I daresay she's to be found somewhere in Soho."

"That would be dangerous, for the police would discover her," I remarked.

"No. Remember that she was seen by only a couple or three persons beside Garshore, therefore the description given to the police must of necessity be vague. And, there being some thousands of young Frenchwomen resident in that quarter of London, she'll be more effectively concealed than if she escaped abroad."

"Scotland Yard has many secret agents in Soho," I remarked.

"And not one of them will discover the woman Lebas, depend upon it."

He spoke in a tone of quiet conviction, with a ring of despair in his voice. My departure for England seemed completely to have unnerved him. It was as though he would have given up all hope of clearing himself rather than I should leave him.

"Come, come," I said. "It is useless taking that tone. At least I can do my best to find the woman Lebas while I am in London."

"With what object?" he inquired.

"With the object of protecting you, Granny."

He laughed bitterly.

"My dear fellow, you are tilting against the wind. Ah! I only wish that I dare tell you everything. But if I did so I'd lose your friendship—and you are now my only friend."

"Granny," I said, very seriously, "you have already admitted your guilt, but I have not turned my back upon you. You have my deepest sympathy."

"I know, dear old fellow," he cried, unshed tears standing in his eyes. "And I would tell you all—if I could—ah!—if I only could."

"Then tell me where in Soho I may find this Marie Lebas," I remarked.

For a moment he hesitated.

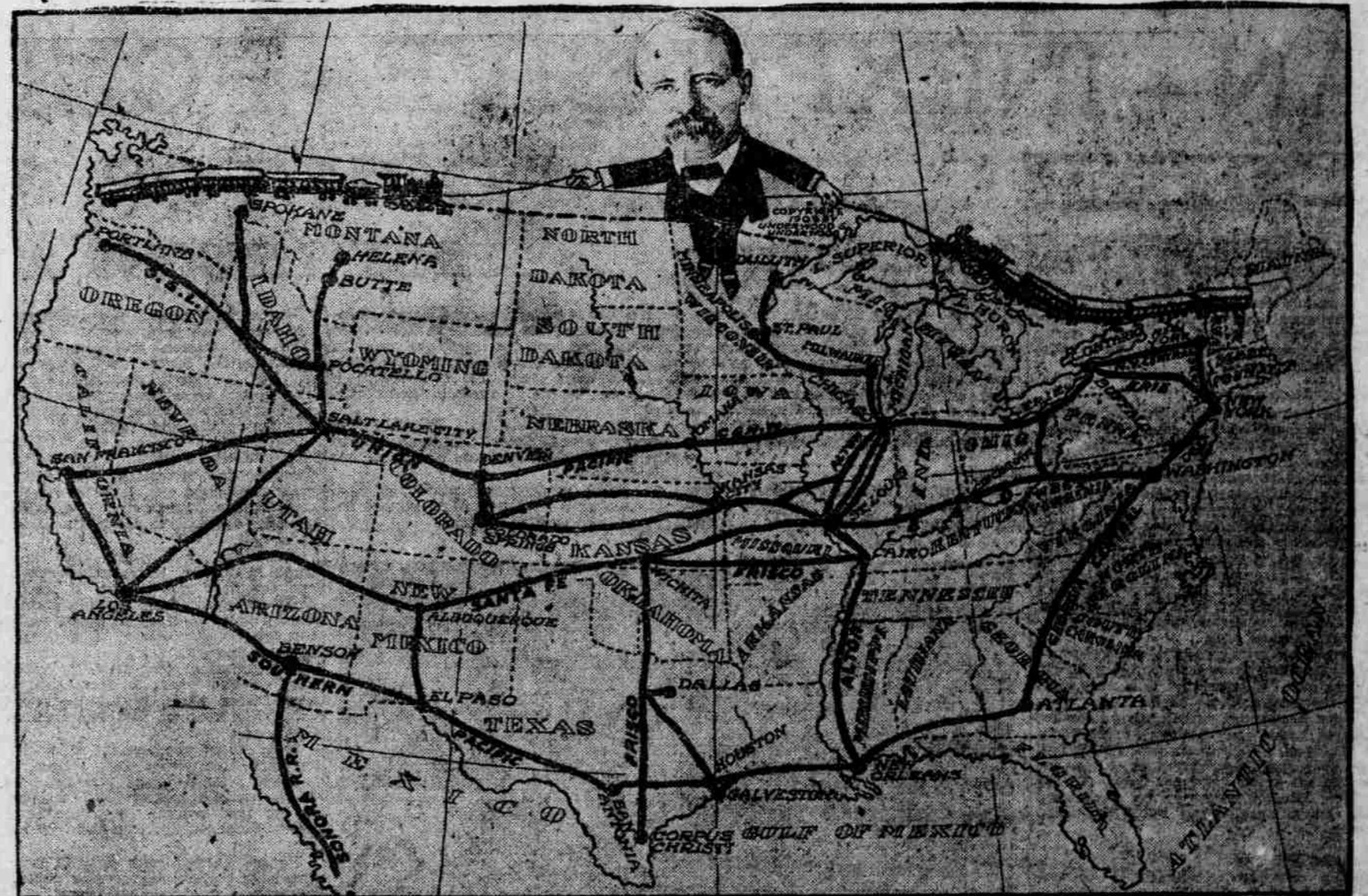
"In Dean street," he said. "There is a blanchisseuse about half way along on the left, going up from Shaftesbury avenue—name of Perrin, Mme. Perrin is Marie's friend, just as she is Lydia Popescu's."

Next day I left Constantinople by that dusty train of wagons—the Orient express, and duly arrived four days later at Charing Cross. In defiance of the surveillance of the metropolitan police, who no doubt were mystified as to where I had been all those weeks, and who would quickly have me beneath their eye again. That night I slept at my chambers, dull and dusty, because of my unexpected return, and next day walked round to Dean street in search of the woman who, in all probability, knew the real truth.

I had no desire to bring inquisitive detectives upon her if I found her, and was therefore delighted to find that the vigilant watch upon my chambers had been relaxed. If Granny wished to preserve his secret, as it seemed, why had he betrayed the whereabouts of Marie Lebas?

Without difficulty I found the little French laundry with the name "Mme. Perrin" painted over the window, but the discovery I made there was so amazing, so utterly staggering, that I was held absolutely speechless—as you, my reader, to whom I am now making confession, would have been had you lived through these hot, breathless, never-to-be-forgotten ten days of mystery as I was living at

STUPENDOUS SYSTEM OF RAILWAYS UNDER CONTROL OF THE LATE EDWARD H. HARRIMAN AT HIS DEATH



The death of Edward H. Harriman removed from the railroad world not only the most powerful figure in all its annals, but the most successful business man in the financial history of the United States. Mr. Harriman was rightly entitled to the sobriquet of "the railroad wizard." Even Jay Gould, who made a colossal fortune out of railroads that others built, would have been a mere pygmy beside Harriman had he lived to see Mr. Harriman at

the pinnacle of his success, for Harriman's chief claim to fame, after all, was that he created rather than acquired. L. F. Loree, one of his chief advisers, said only recently that Mr. Harriman was unique in one particular—he never had a failure. No matter what the condition of a piece of railway property was, no matter how depleted its earnings, once it fell into his skillful hands and was backed by his keen and broad insight it sprang into prosperity with a bound. Judge Lovett, who knew Mr. Harriman prob-

ably better than any of his other business associates, recently said: "His is the master mind, the master hand, which will eventually shape the destinies of the railroads of the new world." The railway systems controlled and rated as Harriman properties are the Union Pacific, Southern Pacific, Sonora railway, Illinois Central, New York Central, Atchafalaya, Texas and Santa Fe, St. Louis and San Francisco, St. Paul, Chicago and Northwestern, Baltimore and Ohio, Delaware and Hudson, Georgia Cen-

tral, Wheeling and Lake Erie railroad. These systems comprise a total of 84,319 miles. Every hour that the sun shines upon American soil, from the instant it peeps over the eastern horizon until its dying rays stream through the Golden Gate, it glitters on miles upon miles of Harriman railway tracks. There are 80,000 stockholders interested in the Harriman securities direct and half a million indirectly dependent upon them. There are more than 350,000 persons on the Harriman payroll.

that moment. I will relate it all just as it happened to me, a man who was but a straw upon the wind of circumstance.

CHAPTER XXVII.

My Discovery in Dean Street.

You know what a dingy, sunless thoroughfare is Dean street, Soho.

Within the small front shop, behind a mud-splashed window, clean linens and collars—was hanging upon lines, while at a table several dark-haired women, evidently foreigners, their sleeves rolled up, were ironing away for dear life, laughing and chattering the while.

A stout, gray-haired French woman, with white apron, was engaged in checking a laundry list as I entered and made inquiry for madame.

"I am Mme. Perrin, m'sieur," replied the woman in rather musical French, as she straightened herself and turned toward me.

"I've called to request a favor of you, madame," I said, lowering my voice confidentially and raising my hat as I spoke. "The fact is, I—"

My words froze upon my lips. I stood staring as though I had encountered an apparition, for as I spoke the glass door which led to the parlor behind the shop opened and there appeared in the doorway a dark-eyed young woman in white apron and with sleeves rolled up, one of madame's ironers.

"You—mademoiselle!" I gasped, stepping quickly toward her. "I—I—"

But with a look of quick apprehension upon her face she stepped back with a cry of alarm. My attitude had frightened her. She believed, no doubt, that I had taken leave of my senses, while her fellow-workers glanced at me in sheer amazement.

The young woman did not, of course, recognize me. To her knowledge she had never set eyes upon me.

But I had recognized her. Though dressed in plain black, with a white apron and her hair plainly arranged, no second glance was needed to tell me that she was the woman who had called in a cab at the Cecil for Ralph Garshore—the woman who had been pointed out to me by Granny as Lydia Popescu!

How I managed to control myself in the few seconds that followed I cannot tell. I, however, became conscious that only by playing a cunning game could I learn the truth. This unexpected discovery had complicated matters still further, yet fortunately I was able to make pretense that I had mistaken mademoiselle for a lost friend, and, of course, became profuse in my apologies to madame, to mademoiselle and to her companions.

"I fear," I exclaimed in French, "that I've made myself somewhat ridiculous, mademoiselle! I am English—so forgive me!" I laughed.

And the dozen or so ironers all laughed in chorus.

"Mademoiselle! Melanie is always having English admirers," declared madame, with a bristling, business-like air.

I looked across at the woman of mystery and with a pleasant smile, said: "Mademoiselle resembles an old friend of mine. I know she works at a laundry somewhere in London—but London is a big place in which to search."

"We have never met before," laughed the young woman known there as Melanie, apparently unsuspecting now, though at first I saw by her countenance that she had been startled, believing me to be an agent of police.

My course was to appear regretful at creating such surprise. Therefore, treating the whole incident humorously, but still watching the woman's demeanor, I remained a few minutes chatting with madame and her bevy of laughing workgirls, and then politely withdrew. I did not, however, before satisfying myself that I had allayed any suspicion.

I made up a cock-and-bull story that I was in search of a certain Made-moiselle Elise Vaugarde, who had been in my sister's service, and whose relative, an old aunt, had died in Dijon, leaving her a small inheritance. My sister, I said, had been much attached to the girl, and I had promised to endeavor to find her.

The story, I saw, appealed to all the girls, the mysterious Melanie included, and when I walked back toward Shaftesbury avenue it was with feelings of gratification that I had made a great and important discovery.

Granny had declared it was Lydia Popescu who had called at the Cecil. Yet I had found her in hiding in the humble guise of an ironer.

Who was Melanie? Was she Marie Lebas, or was she Lydia Popescu? That was a point for me to decide. My own firm belief was that the dead woman was Lydia Popescu whom Granny hated.

If she were his enemy, an enemy so deadly that it was to his own interests to get rid of her—and it plainly seemed that surely my suspicions were correct.

Was Granny playing me false? Was it not possible that Lydia Popescu—the woman who had been obnoxious to the Minister Souza, and who had assisted a master-criminal to a fortune—might be the woman so cleverly masquerading as an ironer in Soho, and thus avoiding the attentions of the police? Yet if so, then why had the life of this lady's maid Lebas been sacrificed? And why by means so subtle that the whole medical profession of London regarded the cause of death as an enigma?

The tragedy of Redcliffe Gardens betrayed the master hand. No blunder had taken that woman's life. One witness knew the truth, Elfrida Maynard, the sweet, fresh girl from the Yorkshire moors who held me in her toils.

But, alas, fear held her silent. Fear of what?

I did not remain long inactive. Granny Gough, with his complex nature, his careless cosmopolitanism and his genuine philosophy, had now aroused within me curious suspicions—suspicions that I could not define. By telling me that it was not Lydia Popescu who was dead, he might, I thought, be endeavoring to shield himself, and to hide from me the real enormity of his crime.

And yet as I walked along I reflected that that big burly, open-faced fellow with the merry blue eyes—the man who was so essentially a man of the world—the man who loved a tiny child better than his own life, and whose ideal was Myra, so delicate and refined—could never exhibit such meanness as to become the cowardly assassin of a woman.

And so whenever I felt suspicions of my friend creeping upon me I at once put them behind me, resolved to still believe in him, to still endeavor to extricate him from the difficulties into which he had fallen.

My next action, I saw, was to keep a shrewd eye upon the mysterious Melanie.

With that object I set about ascertaining the whereabouts of Garshore, and discovered that he had returned to his comfortable house in Bolton street, his tenant's term being up. He, the man whom the police had never associated with Rufford the master criminal, was living there in ease and security.

He was Granny's arch enemy, therefore he was mine.

I spent that evening in the lounge at the Empire Theater with Cunliffe, but from him I learned nothing. He would tell me nothing regarding Elfrida's connection with the crime. The

police, he said, had endeavored to get a statement from her, but failed. As far as the newspapers were concerned, the Redcliffe Gardens affair was ancient history. It was a mystery—but there were dozens of other events equally mysterious. The public craze for something fresh has to be satisfied by our hourly journals of to-day, and the most disgraceful scandal or the greatest mystery "fizzes out" in three days, notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts to sustain the interest.

"My dear chap," Cunliffe declared over a whisky and soda at the bar, "the affair is a first-class mystery, of course, and there's a warrant out against Granville Gough. But until it is executed and he's extradited, the thing is dead from a journalistic point of view. It certainly was a good story—while it lasted."

"But the police?" I said, without satisfying his curiosity as to where I had been abroad. "Have they yet decided how the woman died?"

"Well—only that some secret and unknown poison was used. Prof. Zimmerman, the pathologist and toxicologist to the London county council; Brandenberg, from Cologne; the home office analyst, and half a dozen of the most noted chemists in the world have all tried to establish the poison used, but they've failed. It was, no doubt, one of the old medieval poisons," he added.

"Rather an unpleasant outlook if we have a person about who can put an end to anybody he likes without fear of detection," I said grimly.

They say your friend Gough is the man with the secret," replied the journalist. "But whoever he is, he certainly has in his hands a very potent power, as shown in this case. At present," he went on, "they are expecting every day at Scotland Yard to come across further evidence of the assassin's exploits. So successful was he in Redcliffe Gardens that he's sure to make a second coup. At least, that's what Morton expects, and to my mind he's not far wrong."

"Then you believe Gough is guilty—eh?" I asked anxiously.

My friend shrugged his shoulders and answered—

"What's the use of discussing it, Ralston? It's an absolute mystery, and will remain so until somebody discovers a clue to the truth. The men of the police have failed. How can you and I hope for success?"

I lit a cigarette slowly, and then, looking straight into his face, said simply:

"I think I know more than the police."

"That's why you were shadowed," he laughed. "Be careful, or you may be watched again."

"Then you can tell your friend Morton that if I am watched again I'll remain inactive, and refrain from working further in the interests of justice."

"He looked at me in surprise. 'So you've discovered something, eh? You've been abroad. They lost you at the yard, old chap, and were very savage over it. I can tell you,' he laughed."

"I admit that I've been across the channel in an endeavor to learn the truth," I remarked, with an air of mystery. "Only," I added, "I would ask you, Cunliffe, to let Morton know that the instant I am followed I shall stay my hand. I'm not an assassin, and I object to being shadowed."

"I'll tell him, if you wish," said my friend, puffing hard at his cigar.

"And after telling him, perhaps you will give me your assistance in avenging the death of an innocent woman, Cunliffe?" I asked very seriously.

"Yes, Ralston, old chap," he declared. "I'll do that, right gladly. And here's my hand in pledge of absolute sec-

recy."

I hesitated a second. Then I grasped the proffered hand. My sole object was to extricate and save the man, my friend, who had, alas! confessed his guilt to me.

CHAPTER XXVIII.
The Man From Nowhere.

Next day, a damp, dispiriting one of autumn, I spent in Soho.

I watched the young woman with the dark eyes arrive at Mme. Perrin's, and pointed her out to my friend the journalist, who at once became interested.

He troubled me over the theory which I held, and wished to know the reason which prompted me to watch the humble French ironer. But to his inquiries I remained dumb, fearing to commit myself, or to reveal any of Granny's secrets. The task we had set ourselves was exciting.

Both of us were dressed in different suits to those we had worn on the previous day. I had on dark brown clothes of foreign cut, which, as a matter of fact, had been made at that tailor at the end of the Karntner Strasse in Vienna, while Cunliffe also wore clothes of foreign appearance. We did this in order not to be too conspicuous in the foreign quarter.

The average Londoner never dreams of that remarkable little world—the most cosmopolitan in the whole universe—existing between Oxford street and Leicestershire square. Men and women of every nation and of every tongue, refugees from oppression in various lands, escaped convicts, criminals wanted by the whole police of Europe, revolutionaries, bank note forgers, bomb makers, printers of seditious literature, and the exiled scum of every continental city are herded there, and allowed to continue their nefarious lives. They are foreigners, so the police do not interfere, unless extradition be applied for.

Germany is practically the only country which attempts to get back its criminals to justice. France but seldom, Russia and Italy never. The scum of Europe, knowing this, makes the foreign quarters of London, Soho, Saffron Hill and certain districts in the east end their haven of refuge.

To be Continued.)

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